

## Jesus Mic Drops.... The Kingdom of Heaven Illustrated

In Matthew Chapter 13 Jesus begins with a parable about a man sowing some seeds. I would like to invite you to read this parable on your own. This is one of the few parables that Jesus gives an explanation of the meaning behind the parable after the disciples ask him why he keeps using stories to teach them.

After the parable about the man sowing seeds and Jesus explanation of the parable, Jesus tells three more parables all beginning with the phrase "The Kingdom of Heaven is like..." In the parable we covered last week with the landowner who goes out and keeps getting workers, the vineyard that the workers worked in represented the kingdom of heaven. So let's begin there.

The phrase kingdom of heaven occurs 32 times in Matthew alone. Sometimes it is also called the "kingdom of God", "the kingdom of the father", or simply "the kingdom". When this phrase is used, it can represent 3 different aspects of a quality of God depending on the context it is used.

**This may seem like a dumb question, but simply put, who is really in charge? The true boss?** Obviously God. **Now how can the phrase "kingdom of God" represent three different aspects of God's "in-charge-ness"?** Maybe it would help to ask **"WHEN" and "WHERE" is he in charge?** Let's ask a few questions to figure out this out.

1. Is heaven the only place God is in charge?
2. Is the physical world the only place God is in charge?
3. Is God only in charge right here in the present?
4. Is God in charge of the future?
5. Is God only in charge of physical things or is God also in charge of spiritual things?

**So from answering these questions, when the kingdom of God is used, it can have:**

1. **A present physical aspect to it:** Why? God is in charge RIGHT NOW and also in charge of ALL THE PHYSICAL WORLD.
2. **A future eternal aspect:** Why? God is in charge of the FUTURE and in charge of ALL ETERNITY
3. **A spiritual aspect to it:** Why? God is not only in charge of the PHYSICAL world, He is in charge of all things SPIRITUAL (which includes heaven, life after death, our souls, our spirits, etc)

**To sum this up, the kingdom of God always refers to God's sovereign reign over His created and redeemed world (heaven and earth) and the people that believe and follow Him.**

**What about the three short parables we will look at today?** In these parables, Jesus is referring to the earthly aspect of God's Kingdom. **What people or things would make up God's kingdom here on earth?** Churches, Christian organizations, and all those participating the work of Jesus Christ.

The three parables we are going to look at are warning about false doctrines. **If you were to give a general definition of "false doctrines" from a Christian standpoint, what would it be?** For me, a false doctrine is something that points or leads somebody AWAY from God and not TOWARDS God. Another definition may be a teaching that leads somebody AWAY from Christ/salvation and not TOWARDS Christ/salvation. False doctrines distort, challenge, or blatantly go against God's Word.

**Have you ever heard or been exposed to any false doctrines? Maybe a better question is to ask, have you ever seen or heard anything that does not match up with God's beliefs.** If you think no, that proves how sneaky the Devil can work in this world. **Let's start with the hidden attacks that may not be so "in your face". Can you say yes to any of these questions when it comes to a TV show, a song or music, an article, a magazine ad, an actor or celebrity, or even a friend of yours?**

1. Any of the above giving the impression that sex before marriage is ok? That it is the cool thing to do and everyone is doing it? I could give a million examples here from the sitcom Friends, the pg-13 movie 50 first dates, and about half the country and rock songs out there. The famously popular movie Pretty Woman is considered a love story with Richard Gere and Julia Roberts. It is basically a movie about a rich guy that picks up a prostitute and falls in love with her. Put enough thought into it, and I bet you could fill up a list yourself.
2. Any of the above give the impression that how you look or your weight decides your self-worth? Plenty of examples here. The quest to be the most pretty, most desired. The media hits the girls the hardest with this.
3. Any of the above give the impression that money is the path to true happiness and joy? Plenty of songs about making the "G's".
4. Any of the above give the impression that putting others down, bullying, or picking on someone is ok? Many comedy movies do this.
5. Any of the above give the impression that being humble is a sign of weakness. In other words, forgiveness is something only people that are weak and have no self-confidence do? Lots of self-help gurus out there teaching the opposite of what God says. Personally, I do not need any Self-Help, I need JESUS-help. Any time I try to do something on my own, I mess it up or it doesn't last.
6. Any of the above give the impressions that physically hurting or killing people is ok? That may sound extreme but what about all the action movies and video games full of senseless violence. Ever heard about or played Grand Theft Auto. If you have that game, seriously, throw it away. What about abortions (which I firmly believe the bible teaches is wrong)? What about the celebration of homosexuality (which I firmly believe the bible teaches is wrong)? There are many movies where abortion and homosexuality is celebrated. Much of the media ostracizes those who are willing to say they think that does not match up with the Bible and God's plans.
7. We could go on and on....

**I want to encourage you to be on your guard just as the Bible tells us to. Be able to identify what is biblically right and wrong. Do not just "go with what the world says" because someone tells you need to think one way or another! The Bible is God's "letter" to you, use it.**

**What about attacks on our religion that are a little more in our face. Attacks that you may face when you start talking with unbelievers about God. What could you face in college? What are some false doctrines you may face that would be more of an attack on God and Christianity?** God is not real. The bible is not reliable. Jesus Christ is not the only way. This work or act will get me to heaven. Scripture cannot be trusted. The Bible is a myth/fairy-tale.....

In the context of the 3 parables we will be covering, the "Kingdom of God" would include churches, Christian organizations, and all those participating in the work of Jesus Christ. Jesus gives us warnings in these parables to be aware and alert for false teachings. He also points out that there can be false

teachings mixed in with right teachings and even hidden in the Kingdom of God (churches, Christian organizations, and those doing Christian works). Let's look at some questions:

1. Do you think there are false believers in the same group along with true believers?
2. Do you think there are some religious leaders in the world that are actually false believers and lead people astray?
3. Do you think some of these false prophets truly believe they are doing what is right but in reality, Satan has got them fooled?
4. Do you think good Christians are led astray sometimes by following these false teachings?
5. Do you think there are false doctrines in some Christian circles?
6. Do you think it is always easy to distinguish between a true believer and a false believer?

I think it is important that we talk about false doctrines because most of your life, you are not going to be safely nestled within the church walls or in your homes surrounded by a Christian family.

- Most of you probably have faced people and things in your life that have challenged your faith and what you believe
- In college, your faith will be challenged even more. There will be people from all walks of life and all sorts of different religions and beliefs that will not match up to what you believe.
- There will be many that will attack God and the Bible and think you are naïve because of what you believe.
- TV/radio/social media is constantly barraging us with different ideals on what is right and what is wrong.

**If you had an upset stomach and I handed you a bright green pill and told you to take it, would you just take it or find out what it is and if it is safe to take?** You would research what you are putting in your body. **Shouldn't we do the same thing when it comes to what we are feeding our souls?** Absolutely.

**Do we live in some hostile country where owning a bible would get us thrown in jail or executed?** No. **Generally speaking, if we get caught up in false beliefs that go against what God teaches, do we really have an excuse?** We all have access to a bible. God has given us brains and the Spirit to be able to read our Bibles and discern what His thoughts are. That is your responsibility as a Christian. Know what you believe and why.

Let's move on to our parables....

### **The Parable of the Wheat and Tares: Matthew 13:24-30**

**What is a tare?** Weeds

**Read 10:24-26. What two individuals are mentioned in these verses?** A good man and his enemy. **Within the "Kingdom of God" here on earth, who is the "good" man and who is the "enemy"?** Keep in mind what we talked about earlier. The idea that in the Kingdom of God, there can be false teachings that have hidden themselves among what Jesus had started. The good man is Jesus because he sows good seed that stands for truth. The enemy represents the devil who tries to bring false teachings among Christians and to tries to make them stray.

**What does the good man do?** He went and sowed good seed in his field. This represents what Jesus did, spread truth and love into the world.

**Notice in verse 25, we have a third person or persons here, while MEN slept. Who would this plural word MEN represent?** This is not the same person as the good man in verse 24 and is not the enemy. The “men” represent believers.

**When did the enemy come and put weeds in his field? Were the weeds put away from the good seeds in some special area of the field or among the good seeds? When did the enemy come and do this?** The weeds were put among the good seeds and Jesus is warning us to be on our guard about false teachings being mixed in with good teachings. **Do you think Jesus is giving us some advice when he tells us “while men slept, his enemy came? Could this enemy have gotten away with this if the “men” watching the field were awake?** Jesus is telling believers to be alert and informed. If they were, the weeds could have never infiltrated the field and the “good seed”.

**Let’s now read verses 26-30.**

**What does verse 26 tell us?** The seeds grew up and brought fruit, but weeds also appeared in the good crop.

**The servants went out to the field and saw these weeds. Notice they didn’t just immediately start pulling up weeds. They went and asked the owner of the field what?** They asked him if he what he sowed in the field was good seed. They then asked why it had weeds in it.

Do you think this is a good representation of how Christians might sometimes be a little blind to the idea that there could actually be false teachings mixed within this realm of what is labeled “Christianity”?

**The servants are asking the owner if what he sowed was good seeds. Did the owner plant the weeds there? In the same way, if someone teaches something different than what Jesus taught, and then turns around and calls it the Word of God, is it really?** What Jesus taught was pure and good. If there are false teachings that come up around his words, they are not from him.

**In verse 28, the owner answers them. Who has put these weeds in the field?** The enemy.

**At the end of verse 28, the servants ask an important question. Shall we gather them up??**

**The owner answers with a definitive NO. Why did he not want the servants to gather the weeds up?** Have you ever went and tried to pull weeds in a garden or flower bed? When the weeds and good plants were all tightly packed in together, isn’t it hard to distinguish between the two? What about good plants that may look like weeds at first when they are young plants?

**Are there people in the world that have accepted Christ in their lives, but may have temporarily fallen away from how they should be living?** I think we can all relate to that! There even can be some people that on the outside do not appear they have Christ in them, but in reality they do but are going through a rough time in their lives not making the best decisions.

The owner did not want the servants to unknowingly uproot some of the good plants, the wheat, along with the weeds. We can have good ideas of people we know that may not have Christ in their life and

certain people that we feel led to witness to, but ultimately, The Lord Himself is the only one that knows all.

It is really impossible for us to truly distinguish an unfruitful believer in the Kingdom of God from a false believer. Only the Lord knows what is truly in someone's heart.

**What does the owner tell the servants in the last verse 30?** To wait until the "harvest" and the "reapers" will be told to gather all the weeds, bind them in a bundle, and burn them and gather all the "wheat" into my "barn"

**Remember that the owner that planted the good seeds is the Lord. What do the following represent when it comes to the Kingdom of God?**

1. The harvest: the harvest is the coming of the Lord or judgement.
2. The reapers: the angels or whatever means the Lord uses to come gather his people. The separation of the saved from the unsaved.
3. The wheat: Believers
4. The weeds: Unbelievers
5. The burning of the weeds: Unbelievers going to hell
6. The barn: Believers going to heaven.

**Does it make you feel uncomfortable talking about these kinds of things? The whole idea of Hell and end times?** I'm not gonna lie, this can seem scary when we talk about these things. Judgement. End times. Hell.

**If talking about these things makes you anxious, I want you to remember to not get too caught up in the emotions of it all. I want you to focus on the facts. This parable and Jesus telling us these things should help you focus on three main things:**

1. **JOY and PEACE:** This parable should bring a great amount of joy and peace knowing that you are a child of God after you accept Christ into your life. You are promised eternity in Heaven. You are no longer an enemy of God. If the Lord came back today, you would be gathered up and escape any kind of wrath that remains
2. **THANKFULNESS:** All of this is only available to you because of Jesus Christ. Not because of your church membership, or your good works, or anything that you can be done. We would all be doomed to Hell if it wasn't for Christ. Be thankful every day for this.
3. **MOTIVATION:** The point you realize that this day of Judgement is coming and that Hell is just as real as Heaven, you start getting a little more serious about your witness. We are called to witness and spread the gospel through our actions and words. We cannot waste time judging everyone because truly we don't know their hearts as Jesus does. Let's just do our job as a Christian and leave the "harvest" to God!